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THE TEN WORDS.

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THE Decalogue, or Ten Commandments, is an independent code that has been taken up bodily into the Hexateuch. This is proved by its insertion in two places (Exod. 20:2-17; Deut. 5:6-21), by its formal introduction as a particular utterance of Yahweh (Exod. 20:1; Deut. 5:2-5), by the declaration that it alone was written on the tables of stone (Exod. 24:12; 34:1; Deut. 4:13; 10:4), by its interruption of the continuity both of Exodus and of Deuteronomy, and by certain peculiarities of its diction and style.

The meaning of all the commandments is clear, except of the one which forbids the lifting up of the name of Yahweh unto naught. From earliest times the meaning of these words has been disputed. Most of the theories agree that "lift up" is to be taken in the sense of "speak," and differ only as to the interpretation of "naught;" some understanding it as meaning "trivial," others as "false," and still others as "irreverent" or "sinful." All these interpretations of the commandment labor under serious difficulties, and this raises the suspicion that there is something wrong in the common assumption that "lift up the name" means "utter the name." As a matter of fact a careful study of Old Testament usage shows that "lift up" never has the sense of "speak" or "utter," but always that of "cry out" or "invoke." "Lift up the name of Yahweh" is the exact equivalent of "call upon the name of Yahweh," which is the common expression for "worship." Among the early Hebrews, "to call upon the name of Yahweh" meant to invoke him in connection with a sacrifice (*cf.* Gen. 12:8; 1 Kings 18:23 f.; 1 Sam. 1:3; Zeph. 3:9; Exod. 20:24; 23:13; 22:19). We are justified, accordingly, in thinking that "naught" in this commandment refers to the absence of an offering, and that the command-

ment is to be translated, "Thou shalt not cry aloud the name of Yahweh, thy God, when thou hast brought no sacrifice." Thus interpreted, the law is the equivalent of the law in the Book of the Covenant, "None shall appear before me empty" (Exod. 34:20*b*; 23:16; *cf.* 23:28). Such a law is entirely in accord with the genius of the older Hebrew religion, and it is noteworthy that in all the other Hexateuchal codes, laws in regard to sacrifice stand between laws concerning polytheism and the sacred seasons, just where this law stands in the Decalogue (*cf.* Exod. 20:24-26; 34:19; Deut., chap. 12; Lev. 19:5-8).¹

The contents of the Decalogue, accordingly, may be summarized as follows:

1. Declaration of the sovereignty of Yahweh (Exod. 20:2; Deut. 5:6).
2. Prohibition of the worship of other gods (Exod. 20:3; Deut. 5:7).
3. Prohibition of images (Exod. 20:4-6; Deut. 5:8-10).
4. Prohibition of worship without sacrifice (Exod. 20:7; Deut. 5:11).
5. Command to keep the Sabbath (Exod. 20:8-11; Deut. 5:12-15).
6. Command to honor parents (Exod. 20:12; Deut. 5:16).
7. Prohibition of murder (Exod. 20:13; Deut. 5:17).
8. Prohibition of adultery (Exod. 20:14; Deut. 5:18).
9. Prohibition of theft (Exod. 20:15; Deut. 5:19).
10. Prohibition of false witness (Exod. 20:16; Deut. 5:20).
11. Prohibition of coveting (Exod. 20:17; Deut. 5:21).

Here are eleven words, but according to Hebrew tradition (Deut. 4:13; 10:4; *cf.* Exod. 34:2) there were only ten. Ten is a more natural number than eleven, because it corresponds with the number of the fingers. Precepts that can be counted on the fingers are remembered, and the danger of loss or of addition is not so great as in the case of an arbitrary number. The arrangement of laws in groups of ten is found among many ancient peoples. It appears in the Book of the Covenant, the

¹ For a fuller discussion of this interpretation see my article in the forthcoming number of the *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 1903, Part II.

Holiness Code, and other portions of the Hexateuchal legislation. There is a strong antecedent probability, therefore, that it was the original structure of the Decalogue.

The attempt to reconstruct the tenfold arrangement has given rise to a number of theories. Philo, Josephus, and the Reformed churches obtain the requisite number by uniting 1 and 2 of the summary given above, and defend this view by the claim that 1 is not a commandment but a declaration, so that it ought to be regarded as a preface to 2. Against this theory are the facts that 1 is an utterance of such fundamental importance that it is unnatural to regard it as a mere introduction to 2, and that the propositions of the Decalogue are never called "commandments" but only "words," a term that is entirely appropriate if 1 be regarded as a separate enactment.

Augustine and the Roman and Lutheran churches unite 1, 2, and 3, and divide 11 into two commandments. This view has nothing in its favor. As we have just seen, 1 and 2 cannot naturally be combined. Still less can 2 and 3 be combined. The one is a prohibition of polytheism, and the other is a prohibition of the use of images within the worship of Yahweh. These are distinct matters that are never confused in Hebrew legislation. The partition of 11 into two laws, one prohibiting the coveting of a neighbor's wife, the other, the coveting of the rest of his property, is also unnatural. This division of the Decalogue has arisen solely from the desire to obtain three commandments, a symbol of the Trinity, on the first table, and seven, the number of perfection, on the second table.

The Talmud and modern Jewish theologians unite 2 and 3; but this, as just remarked, involves a confusion between polytheism and idolatry. It appears, accordingly, that there is no satisfactory way in which the number ten can be made out of our present Decalogue; and this creates a strong probability that one "word" has been added to the original number. As we shall see more fully presently, it can hardly be doubted that the superfluous word is number 3, the prohibition of images.

A comparison of the form of the Decalogue in *Exod.*, chap. 20, with that in *Deut.*, chap. 5, shows that a number of other addi-

tions have been made in the course of its transmission. Deuteronomy contains several phrases that are not found in Exodus, and therefore cannot have stood in the original code. Such phrases are, "as Yahweh thy God commanded thee" (vs. 12); "thine ox, nor thy ass, nor any of" (vs. 14); "as Yahweh thy God commanded thee" (vs. 16), "and that it may be well with thee" (vs. 16). In the last commandment, Deuteronomy puts the wife before the house, under the influence of a more advanced legal conception that no longer regarded the wife as a mere chattel belonging to her husband's household, as is the case in the form of the law in Exodus. The reasons annexed to the Sabbath law are different in Exodus and in Deuteronomy; these reasons, accordingly, cannot have stood in the original code. The reason given in Exodus is evidently based upon the priestly account of the Sabbath rest of God at creation (Gen. 2:2 f.), and therefore must be a very late addition.

The fact that the Decalogue can thus be shown to have undergone progressive amplification creates the presumption that the other reasons annexed to the commandments are secondary, even though they may be found in both of the recensions. This view is confirmed by the fact that these reasons continually presuppose residence in the land of Canaan and therefore are inconsistent with Mosaic authorship, while the commandments themselves contain no such presuppositions. The contents of the first table in its present form are nearly three times as long as the contents of the second table. Without the exhortations this would not be the case. If the Decalogue was engraved upon tables of stone that a man could carry, as tradition asserts, it must have been in a briefer form than that presented by the present Decalogue with all the arguments appended to the first five commandments. Moreover, the commandments are more solemn and impressive, and therefore probably more original, in their briefest possible form. It is the general belief of modern critics that the original Decalogue contained the Ten Words in their briefest possible form: "I, Yahweh, am thy God," "Thou shalt have no other gods besides me," etc.

We come now to the question of the age of this code The

Hexateuchal documents J and E agree that the words were spoken to Moses in Sinai during a thunder-storm, which terrified the people unaccustomed to such things in Egypt (Exod., chap. 19). Both represent the people as hearing the voice of Yahweh, *i. e.*, the thunder, but not as understanding his words; *cf.* 19:9, "that the people may hear when I speak with thee" (*cf.* also vs. 19). The case is analogous to John 12:28 ff., where Jesus heard a voice from heaven, but the multitude said, "It thundered." A later and less authentic tradition in Deut. 4:10-13 records that all the people heard the Ten Words as well as Moses. According to Deut. 4:13, the Ten Words were the basis of the initial covenant made between Yahweh and Israel at Sinai, and the same conception is suggested by the present arrangement of J and E in the book of Exodus.

According to Exod. 24:12; 39:18*b*; 33:15 f., 19 (E); 34:1 (J); and Deut. 4:13; 5:22; 9:10; 10:2-4, the Ten Words were written on two tables of stone by the finger of God. Of no other Hebrew code is such a statement made, and it is hard to see how it could have been made in this case unless the Ten Words were older and more sacred than all the other codes, and were written in an archaic character that was unintelligible to a later generation, and therefore were believed to be the work of God in the same way in which the Minæan and Sabæan inscriptions are believed by the modern Arabs to be the work of the Jinns.

Deut. 10:5 and P in Exod. 25:16, 21; 31:7; 40:20 inform us that the ark was made to contain the tables of the covenant; and, according to the Deuteronomic passage, 1 Kings 8:9, they were still in it in the time of Solomon. The ark is known, however, to have been one of the most ancient sacred objects of the Hebrews, and the association of the Decalogue with it seems to attest the antiquity of that code.

It appears, accordingly, that tradition is strongly in favor of the Decalogue being a product of the Mosaic age. Those who deny this are forced to impeach the validity of this evidence. Goethe, in a minor treatise entitled *Zwei bisher unerörtete biblische Fragen*, first called attention to the fact that in Exod. 34:11-26

(J) Yahweh gives Moses a series of commandments and then in vs. 27 f. says to him, "Write thou these words, for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel. And he was there with Yahweh forty days and forty nights; and he did neither eat bread nor drink water. And he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the Ten Words." Here the covenant just made with Moses, rather than that recorded in Exod., chap. 20, seems to be regarded as the Ten Words, and these are said to have been written by Moses instead of by Yahweh. If this be so, then J has an entirely different tradition from E as to the contents of the Decalogue, and the testimony as to its Mosaic authorship is rendered invalid.

This argument, although ingenious, is very uncertain. In the first place, in Exod. 34 : 1, J himself knows that Yahweh writes the words on the tables of stone; we must not, therefore, translate vs. 28 in such a way as to make it contradict this verse. There is nothing to show that the words, "and he wrote" in vs. 28 refer to Moses and not to Yahweh, who has been mentioned in the previous verse. If, however, it is Yahweh who writes the Ten Words, while Moses writes only the preceding covenant-code in Exod., chap. 34, then there is no conflict of tradition in regard to the contents of the Decalogue. In the second place, vs. 28 does not identify the covenant written upon the tables with the foregoing covenant in Exod. 34 : 11-26, for it does not say, "He wrote upon the tables the words of *this* covenant," but, "He wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, *the ten words*," evidently seeking to distinguish the covenant written by Yahweh from that written by Moses. In the third place, the title "tablets of the covenant" used in vs. 28 is the regular Deuteronomic designation for the Decalogue of Exod., chap. 20, and Deut., chap. 5, while the laws of Exod. 34 : 11-26 = Exod. 20 : 23—23 : 33 are known as "the Book of the Covenant" (*cf.* Exod. 24 : 4, 7). In the fourth place, the attempt to count exactly ten laws in the supposed Decalogue of J in Exod. 34 : 11-26 necessitates arbitrary eliminations from the text. In reality there are at least thirteen laws in the J recension of the Book of the Covenant, and the excision of three of these by Stade, Wellhausen, and others rests upon no scientific principle.

It appears, therefore, that the supposed "Decalogue of J" in Exod. 34: 11-26 has only an imaginary existence. This code is not a doublet to the Decalogue of E in Exod., chap. 20, but is a doublet to E's Book of the Covenant in Exod. 20: 23-23: 33, a code which is always carefully distinguished from the Decalogue. The tradition of the Mosaic authorship of the Decalogue, accordingly, is not shaken by the statements of Exod. 34: 27 f.

The tradition that the Decalogue was written upon two tables of stone, and that these were deposited in the ark, is dealt with in a high-handed manner by Stade, Cheyne, and others. They cannot deny the antiquity of the ark nor the fact that it contained stones, but they assert that these stones were primitive Hebrew fetishes on which nothing was written. For this theory there is not an atom of historical evidence. It is a pure speculation designed to back up a foregone conclusion, and it does not impair in the least the evidence of Hebrew tradition. We must conclude, therefore, that, as far as it goes, the testimony of Old Testament tradition is unanimous in support of the Mosaic authorship of the Decalogue.

The evidence from the relation of the Decalogue to other Hebrew literature points in the same direction. The Decalogue is the briefest and simplest of all the Hebrew codes. This indicates naturally that it is the oldest, and that it lies at the basis of the other legislation. To assume, as Wellhausen does, that its simplicity is the result of late philosophic abstraction, is to ignore the analogy of the other codes. The tendency of Hebrew legislation from the earliest days down to the compilation of the Talmud was always in the direction of amplification and complexity. E's book of the Covenant is an expansion of J's recension, and Deuteronomy is an expansion of it. H and P go far beyond D in the subtleties and refinements of their enactments. There is not a case on record of a movement in the direction of simplicity, or of the production of a late code that embodied only the fundamental principles of a legislative development. The only natural theory, therefore, is that the Decalogue lies at the beginning, and not at the end, of the history of Hebrew jurisprudence.

This theory is confirmed by the fact that the general plan of the Decalogue is that followed by all the other codes. They begin with the allegiance that Israel owes Yahweh, follow this with provisions in regard to correct ritual worship, sacred seasons, reverence for those in authority, and conclude with more specifically moral duties. This uniformity of method is hard to explain except on the theory that the longer codes use the legislation of the Decalogue as a prototype.

Furthermore, when we compare the legislation of the Decalogue with enactments on the same subject in other codes, we find that in every case, except that of image worship, the legislation of the Decalogue is expanded and developed in the other codes. This indicates that it is the starting point from which Hebrew legislation set out. Compare Exod. 20 : 2 with Exod. 23 : 20-31 ; 34 : 10-12 ; Lev. 18 : 3-5 ; 20 : 22-4. Compare Exod. 20 : 3 with Exod. 20 : 23 ; 22 : 20 ; 23 : 13, 24, 32 f. ; 34 : 12-16 ; Lev. 19 : 4a ; 17 : 8, 9. Compare Exod. 20 : 7 with Exod. 22 : 29 f. ; 34 : 19 f. Compare Exod. 20 : 8 with Exod. 23 : 10-13 ; 34 : 21. Compare Exod. 20 : 12 with Exod. 21 : 15, 17 ; 22 : 28 f. Compare Exod. 20 : 13 with Exod. 21 : 12-27. Compare Exod. 20 : 15 with Exod. 22 : 1-15. Compare Exod. 20 : 16 with Exod. 23 : 1-3, 6-8. In no case, except the prohibition of images, can it be shown that the Decalogue is dependent upon other legislation, but in many cases other legislation can be shown to depend upon it. The inference is unavoidable, that it is older than the other codes.

The earliest passage in the prophets to sum up the divine commandments in a form analogous to the Decalogue is Jer. 7 : 9, but this does not prove that the Decalogue was written shortly before the time of Jeremiah, because all its individual requirements are found at an earlier date. Worship of Yahweh only, bringing of offerings, observance of Sabbaths, reverence for parents, chastity, honesty, reverence for life and for property, are all known to the early prophets. It is unfair, therefore, to say that they do not know the Ten Words because they do not happen to quote all at the same time. The argument from silence to non-existence is valid only if the silence is complete.

If none of the precepts of the Decalogue were known to the prophets even in an isolated form, then it would be safe to infer that it was not in existence in their day ; but when we observe that the matters which they emphasize are precisely the matters which are emphasized in the Decalogue, then we must assume that they knew it, even though they had no occasion to refer to it by name.

Coming now to the internal evidence for the age of this document, let us examine its precepts one by one to see whether they correspond with the historical situation in the time of Moses. The opening proposition, "I, Yahweh, am thy God," is admitted by everybody to have been a cardinal doctrine of the ancient Hebrew religion. It appears in the ancient Song of the Red Sea (Exod. 15 : 2), and in the ancient Song of Deborah (Judg. 5 : 11). It is attested by all the documents of the Hexateuch and by the early prophets (*cf.* Exod. 6 : 7 ; 19 : 5, 6 ; 23 : 22 ; Deut. 4 : 32-8 ; Amos 3 : 2 ; 5 : 14).

The prohibition of the worship of any other god has often been claimed as an enunciation of monotheism, and therefore as inconsistent with Mosaic authorship ; but this is a misconception of its scope. The law does not say, "Thou shalt not *believe* that there are other gods besides me," but, "Thou shalt not *have* other gods besides me." It does not deny the existence of other deities, but it denies that they are legitimate objects of worship for Israel. This is not monotheism, but monolatry, and is precisely the doctrine of the pre-prophetic religion of Israel. In the Song of Miriam (Exod. 15 : 11) we read, "Who is like thee, O Yahweh, among the Gods ?" and the proper name Micaiah, which is at least as old as the period of the Judges (*cf.* Judg. 17 : 1), means, "Who is like Yahweh ?" In Judg. 11 : 24 Jephthah says to the king of Ammon, "Wilt not thou possess that which Chemosh, thy god, giveth thee to possess ? So whomsoever Yahweh, our God, hath dispossessed from before us, them will we possess." In 1 Sam. 26 : 19 David laments that by being driven out of the land of Israel he is precluded from the worship of Yahweh : "They have driven me out this day, that I should have no share in the inheritance of Yahweh, saying, Go

serve other gods." Properly interpreted, therefore, this commandment is a witness for the antiquity of the Decalogue. If it had originated in the prophetic period, it would have had a pronounced monotheistic tone.

The prohibition of images, on the other hand, cannot have originated in the Mosaic age: (1) because the Book of the Covenant in Exod. 20:23 (E) and 34:17 (J) prohibits only molten images. If a sweeping prohibition of all images had stood in an earlier code, it is inconceivable that the Book of the Covenant should have taken a lower stand and have prohibited only molten images, *i. e.*, images of the Canaanitish type, and have allowed all other sorts of images to remain undisturbed. (2) There is no trace of opposition to the use of images in the worship of Yahweh before the time of the literary prophets, and some of the best men of ancient Israel are known to have used them (*cf.* Judg. 8:27; 1 Sam. 19:13; 1 Kings 12:29). (3) The number of the Ten Words is complete without this prohibition, inasmuch as the opening sentence, "I, Yahweh, am thy God," is of such fundamental importance that it must be regarded as forming alone the first word. For these reasons the Mosaic authorship of the law against images cannot be maintained, and it must be regarded as one of the later interpolations in the Decalogue.

The commandment not to lift up the name of Yahweh without bringing an offering is thoroughly in accord with the genius of the ancient Hebrew religion. That religion was primarily sacrificial, and if no commandment in regard to sacrifice were found in the Decalogue, it would be a serious objection to its Mosaic authorship. Properly interpreted, however, this law corresponds perfectly with the historical situation in the time of Moses.

The Sabbath law has been objected to as implying an agricultural life in the land of Canaan, but this objection applies only to the exhortation appended to the commandment, which, as we have seen, is a later addition. The Sabbath itself is a primitive Semitic holy day, connected with the phases of the moon. Moon-worship was universal among the ancient Semites. The Hebrew

name for "month" is the same as for "new moon." The ritual word *hallal* "praise," which occurs in the formula *hallelujah*, is connected with the Arabic *ahalla* "to greet the new moon" (*hilal*). The priestly legislation prescribes special rites for the day of new moon, and the entire sacred calendar is constructed on the basis of the lunar month. Most of the great annual festivals coincide with the day of full moon. It is probable, therefore, that the Sabbath also was originally connected with the moon's phases, and this view is confirmed by the fact that repeatedly in the Old Testament "new moons and Sabbaths" are mentioned together. This combination points to a time when Sabbaths were nearly related to new moons as dividers of the lunar month. A lunar month has approximately twenty-nine days. Counting out the day of new moon, as an interval falling between the months, the remaining twenty-eight days are divided naturally by the moon's phases into periods of seven; and the seventh, fourteenth, twenty-first, and twenty-eighth days are observed as Sabbaths. Babylonian calendars of great antiquity have come down to us in which these days are described as holy. There is no difficulty, therefore, in regarding the Sabbath as a primitive Hebrew institution.

The fifth word, "Honor thy father and thy mother," is so thoroughly in accord with the patriarchal system of government that there is no reason for calling its Mosaic authorship in question.

The laws against murder, adultery, theft and false witness, are paralleled in the Egyptian Book of the Dead, and in the recently discovered code of Hammurabi, king of Babylon, both of which were composed centuries before Moses. No reason appears, therefore, why Moses might not have inserted legislation on these subjects in a code that was meant to be the fundamental law of Israel.

The commandment against coveting a neighbor's house is objected to on the ground that it contains too abstract an idea for the age of Moses. But surely, even in primitive times, men were capable of observing that evil desires are the cause of sin; and if they could observe this, there is no reason why such a commandment might not have been given.

It appears, accordingly, that, with the exception of the prohibition of images, there is no commandment in the Decalogue that is inconsistent with the tradition of its Mosaic authorship; and that there are several commandments that can be proved to belong to the very oldest period of the Hebrew religion. It remains, then, to inquire whether there is anything in the code as a whole, or in the proportion of its contents, that is inconsistent with the claim of Mosaic authorship. Many recent writers declare that it is exclusively ethical, and that this emphasis stamps it as belonging to the age of the prophets rather than to the age of Moses. They compare it with the great utterance in Micah 6:8, "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth Yahweh require of thee but to do justly and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God;" and they claim that it must have originated in the same period.

In reply to this argument it may be urged: (1) that the argument exaggerates the non-ethical character of the old Hebrew religion. The conception of Yahweh as a national deity involved that he was the custodian of those social virtues that were necessary to the maintenance of the nation. The difference between the old Hebrew religion and the religion of the prophets lay, not in the absence of morality, but in a subordination of morality to ritual. The old Hebrew doctrine was ritual and righteousness; the prophetic doctrine was righteousness and not ritual. The strong ethical features in the J and the E histories and in the stories of Samuel, Nathan, and Elijah show that morality must have been an element of the oldest Hebrew religion; and when we consider the historical origin of that religion, we see why this was necessary. Yahweh was not the ancestral God of Israel, who was bound to help it because of natural obligation, but he was the God of Sinai and of Midian, who of his own free will resolved to rescue an alien people from the bondage of Egypt. This indicated from the outset that he was a deity with moral characteristics, and could not fail to give a moral quality to his religion. (2) This argument exaggerates the prominence of the ethical element in the Decalogue. On any interpretation the Sabbath law remains a

distinctly ritual provision, and it stands in the first place before the moral laws. The prophets, on the other hand, make no distinction between Sabbaths and other holy days in their repudiation of ritual. Isaiah's utterance in 1 : 13 is representative :

Vain is the sweet savor of sacrifice, it is an abomination unto me ;
 New moon and Sabbath, calling of assemblies —
 I cannot (endure) fast and solemn meeting.
 Your new moons and your set days my soul hates ;
 They are an incumbrance unto me ; I am tired of bearing it.

It is safe to say that, if the Decalogue had been written by a prophet in the age succeeding Isaiah, he would not have inserted the Sabbath law ; or, at least, would not have put it in the conspicuous place that it now occupies.

Correctly interpreted, as we saw above, the third commandment also is purely ritual, since it enjoins the bringing of a sacrifice whenever Yahweh is invoked. This commandment, like the Sabbath law, takes precedence of the moral laws. It appears, accordingly, that the decalogue, far from occupying the prophetic position of righteousness not ritual, occupies the old Hebrew position of ritual and righteousness. Sacrifices and holy days it demands first as more important in the sight of Yahweh than justice between man and man. This is distinctly a pre-prophetic standpoint.

Finally, the antiquity of the Decalogue may be inferred from its silence in regard to matters that were regarded as fundamentally important in later Hebrew legislation. It commands the bringing of a sacrifice when Yahweh is invoked, but it prescribes no particular place. It thus antedates the entire development that culminated in the restriction of the place of sacrifice to Jerusalem. It is more primitive even than the Book of the Covenant in Exod., chaps. 20—24, which knows a multiplicity of altars, but imposes the restriction that they must be at places where Yahweh has made some special manifestation of himself. Here we see the beginning of a tendency to restrict the place of sacrifice, but in the Decalogue no restriction is as yet imposed.

The third commandment implies that every Israelite is free to sacrifice to Yahweh. It knows nothing of the later develop-

ment that restricted the right of sacrifice to a special guild, and finally to one family within that guild. No priesthood is yet known, and therefore this code must be older than the others in which priests are recognized.

The Sabbath is the only holy day mentioned. In the other codes the three harvest festivals are named, and the sabbatical system is extended to the seventh year of rest for the land. The silence of the Decalogue on these matters is most readily explained by the assumption that it antedates their development, since they are absent from none of the other codes. In like manner the failure to mention any other rulers than parents in the fifth commandment indicates a time when Israel had not yet emerged from a purely patriarchal social organization.

I conclude, accordingly, that the Decalogue in its simplest form is a genuine Mosaic code. It is the charter both of the religion of Yahweh and of the nation of Israel. It is the starting point both of the legalistic and of the prophetic development in Old Testament literature. Religiously and historically it is the most important and most interesting document that has come down to us from Hebrew antiquity.